

Even the most casual reading of this evidence shows that Jesus' words about foot-washing were just as positive, deliberate and unequivocal as were His words at the institution of the Lord's Supper. If there is no hesitancy to accept the literal meaning of His command in one case, why should there be reluctance to accept the literal meaning in the other?

**What enduring lessons are enshrined in this service for us?**

Four lessons are evident:

(a) **It is a memorial of Jesus' life of service.**

Jesus appointed two other great memorials:

The Lord's Supper — The memorial of His death;

Christian Baptism — The memorial of His resurrection.

Is there no memorial of His self-sacrificing life?

Yes, there is. In the washing of His disciples' feet, all the selfless activities of His earthly life are gathered together and focused in one sublime and unforgettable deed!

Says Louis Berkouwer: "That little scene in the upper room is actually the epitome of His entire mediatorial career. It symbolises in striking action all the self-humiliation to which the Master put Himself." (Faith and Sanctification, p 148)

(b) **It is an opportunity to perform a personal service for our King.**

If an opportunity came for us to wash the feet of our Saviour, as Mary did, would we not grasp it eagerly? Would we not count it a high honour? Yet when we wash the feet of the humblest Christian brother, Jesus regards this as a personal service, performed directly to Himself!

**Matt. 25 : 40:** "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me!"

How this fact lifts, transfigures and glorifies this homely ordinance! What new lustre, beauty and dignity it gives to it! When viewed in this light there is nothing menial, servile, or humiliating about this service. Jesus was never so truly regal as when, on that last night, He stooped to perform the task of a slave. It was the kingliest thing that He ever did!

(c) **It is a perpetual reminder that we are "our brother's keeper".**

**Gen. 4 : 9:** "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Cain's callous, irresponsible question received its most decisive answer in the Upper Room that night, as Jesus knelt to wash the feet of His disciples. Satan has tried persistently to convert us all into Cains, to stifle our sense of responsibility towards others, and to make us aloof, indifferent and unfeeling, but Jesus testified by this action that God holds us directly responsible for our influence, not merely upon our non-Christian neighbours, but also upon our own brethren within the Church!

**Rom. 14 : 7:** "None of us liveth unto himself."

**I Cor. 8 : 12:** "When ye sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

(d) **It is an acted pledge that we will do all in our power to keep our brother's life clean.**

**Rom. 14 : 13:** "Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way."

Says J. R. Miller: "We are to come to each other with basin and towel. We are to help each other to be clean Christians. We are to seek the sanctification, purification and upbuilding in character of our fellow disciples . . . Especially must we be cleansed ourselves if we would seek the cleansing of others. What if our own hands, with which we should wash the feet of other disciples, are not clean, but are themselves covered with sin? Instead of cleansing the lives we touch, we shall leave stains upon them."